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a characteristic of this Association, of the subordination of the individual to the general plan. Now if I were a French field marshal, I could decree that from now on and forever after, members of this Association could wear a fourragère of some appropriate shape and texture to loop around—I think it is—the left shoulder; and I may say, incidentally, from our experience, the fourragère would not be made of red tape! I lack that power, and don't

know that the fourragère would not be a little embarrassing, in the long run, in any case. However, in all sincerity, Mr. President, I express on behalf of my chief and his advisers, both military and civilian, the very sincere and heartfelt thanks of the Army for the generous, intelligent, and altogether effective coöperation of the American Library Association throughout the period of the war. This I do with very great pleasure.

### BOOKS AND READING FOR THE NAVY, AND WHAT THEY HAVE MEANT IN THE WAR\*

By VICE-ADMIRAL ALBERT GLEAVES, *Navy Department, U. S. A.*

It is a very great pleasure and privilege for me to be here with you today. Next to ships I would rather talk about books than anything in the world. Since I first began my excursions into literature, through a little classic called "Reading without tears," in words of one syllable, books have been my constant companions. When I first went to sea in 1877—and that is a mighty long time ago—I was accustomed, whenever I had the opportunity and circumstances permitted, to carry with me up on deck, in the mid watch (that is, from midnight to 4 o'clock in the morning) four or five books; I liked to vary my menu every hour. One of those books always was "The spectator"; I don't believe as a midshipman I ever kept watch without "The spectator."

In those days the library aboard the old flagship *Hartford* consisted of a Bible, Story on the Constitution, and Frank Moore's "History of the rebellion," in endless number of volumes. Now, the Bible was used for strictly professional purposes. It was taken out frequently to swear witnesses in court martial cases. I don't think anybody in the ship cared anything about Judge Story's "Commentaries," and as for the "History of the rebellion," the events it described were too recent then to warrant an excursion into the Admiral's sanctum. So the people who loved books

usually took them to sea with them. I think, if I remember correctly, that it was not until the eighties that regular libraries were established on board ship, and it was done at the instigation and suggestion of the late Admiral Chadwick, who was a great book man himself. The Government provided very generously for two libraries aboard ship, one for the officers, called the ship's library, and the other for the crew, but both officers and crew had access to either one or both of the libraries. The ship's library consisted largely of more serious works—what nowadays you call "high-brow stuff"—technical and professional books, essays, histories, and biographies, and things of that sort, while the crew's library consisted mostly of fiction. Those libraries were kept up to date and very generously supplied with the newest books by the Navy Department. The lists were revised from time to time by competent people in the Navy Department, and our libraries aboard ship were such that they were the subject of comment by foreign officers when they came on board ship. The British followed in our footsteps in regard to the establishment of libraries.

When the war came on, the department made further generous allowances, not for the officers alone, but also for the men, in allotting sums for magazines, weeklies, and things of that sort, and in the newer

\*Extemporaneous address.

and larger ships, reading-rooms have been provided for the men, and the men have been encouraged to occupy them and to use them. On Sunday afternoons on board ship, as you will see if you go aboard any of these ships now anchored in harbor in the North River, those rooms are not only occupied by the men, but by the men with their sweethearts. It is a very nice place for men to talk over their affairs with their best girls—and every sailor man has a best girl if he is the proper kind of sailor man.

My attention was first called to the American Library Association in the early part of the war by a representative of the Association, who came to talk over the question with me, as to the possibility of supplying our ships with books. The idea appealed to me instantly, and we decided that a fair proportion of books would be one for every four men. That is the number shown by my order, and those books were put on board ship. I have forgotten how many books were allotted to my force alone. Of course the transport and cruiser force was the largest single active unit during the war; necessarily so, because we had to carry over so many men.

The American Library Association has provided for both services, including the marines, something like a million and a half books. I think I am correct in saying that about 650,000 were sent to the ships, the naval stations, and to the marines. Now, 650,000 books is a goodly number, but the work of the Association did not stop there. When the ships returned, representatives of the Association would come aboard, the books that had been worn out in use were gathered up, and were replaced by good books. The thing that appealed most, I think, to every officer and every man was the unostentatious way in which this work was carried on. There was never any Macedonian calls for help in the way of contributions, but above all, the men were made to realize and to feel that the books were their own. There was no restriction whatever on men drawing them. All the Association asked—they re-

quired nothing—demanded nothing—all the Association asked was that the books should be kept in circulation. That was a very modest request, and that was done.

Now, the question is asked sometimes, "Do the sailors read very much? Do the soldiers read very much?" I know from personal observation that the books were in constant demand, and that they were in constant circulation. They were placed as a rule near the troop compartments for the soldiers, and for the sailors they were placed in their compartments. The books were allotted to them and they would draw these books; they were not responsible in any way for their condition or what became of them. If the books were lost, that was profit and loss to the A. L. A., and didn't concern the sailor man. There was no compulsion, no restraint; they had free access to these books.

The character of the books furnished was above the average. I think the enlisted man does not care so much nowadays about reading wild west stories as he does about something adequate to prepare himself for civil life when he leaves the service. Many of them have only one enlistment, but every man that goes out into the great body politic from the Navy, if he is the right sort of man, is better equipped than when he entered the service. So they want to prepare themselves for civil pursuits, and there has been a great demand, I understand from some of the officers of the Association, for technical books, on electricity, steam, boilers—all that sort of thing. They can read and study on board ship.

I have seen men around on the decks, absorbed in books, and I have always felt if the bos'n mate had to pipe his whistle more than once to get attention and the youthful sailor or soldier who was just a little bit slow in answering the call because he wanted to finish his page or paragraph, and probably did it by carrying the book with one finger in between the pages, was to be excused, because there is nothing that so develops a man as reading. I have often wondered how people who do not

care for reading stand it on board ship, when there is nothing else going on. If he has the love of reading, he wants nothing else; and so I don't see how, when people go abroad and look at pictures and statuary, they can appreciate that art unless they have read about it and know what those things mean.

Your work is education of soldier and sailor along those lines. I have been asked to answer two questions: In the first place, is the work appreciated, and in the second place, is it worth while? I think I am speaking as one having authority, and can say that after close observation I know your work is appreciated. You can see the answer to that in the ragged books passed from hand to hand, and turned in at the end of each voyage. They certainly show that they are appreciated, and I think that you are entitled to the thanks of the Army and the Navy for the splendid work you have done.

Above all, there is nothing sectarian in your work, and if war should come again, I would like to see in all the welfare activities no religious lines drawn. I don't think they make for the best. We are all one in our endeavor to win the war, to save the country, and it does not make any difference whether the Jewish Welfare Board, or the American Red Cross, or the Y. M. C. A. or the Knights of Columbus direct the welfare work. What difference do creed, race, or color make? There should be no distinction, and you are un-

consciously, perhaps, the pioneers on those lines, because your books are there.

Now, is it worth while? I think I may speak for both services when I say that it is. Your work has been most beneficent; your influence has been far-reaching, far more so than I believe any man or woman here realizes except those who have been aboard ship, and have been to the front, and have been in contact with it. All you have done strengthens the mental, moral, and intellectual fiber of every sailor and every soldier, and all for the glory of the nation.

There is just one suggestion I am going to make, and then I am through. We all know your splendid poster of the soldier with the tin hat and his arms full of books. Many of us watched it while it was in its original conception and the artist was painting it there at the library. Now I am going to tell you a little story, and then you will see the point. A lady coming out of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York was talking to a friend, and was enthusiastically praising the soldiers. She said, "My soul has been in khaki for fourteen months." There was a young sailor standing by, who had also been at the opera, and he couldn't help saying to her, "Madam, couldn't you put your soul in blue for a change?"

I am taking the liberty of suggesting, Mr. President, that when your artist designs the next poster, he will put his soul in blue for a change.

## BY FLANDERS BRIDGE: THE ADVENTURES OF AN A. L. A. MAN OVERSEAS

By ASA DON DICKINSON

On December 14 last a group of people assigned to overseas duty with the A. L. A. sailed from New York on the little French liner *Chicago*. In the party were Miss Macdonald of Harrisburg, Miss Fast of Chillicothe, Mr. and Mrs. Kerr of Emporia, and myself. We were joined by Mr. William Allen White, who was going over to report the doings of the Peace Confer-

ence. Norman Angell, also, was on board, very pensive over "The great illusion."

It was a dismal voyage, brightened only by Mr. White's efforts to "come out strong and be jolly," in noble emulation of Mark Tapley. The weather was bad, the food poor, the ship crowded. The temperamental French skipper left the dock in one of the worst fogs New York has ever